



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

June 20, 2018

Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife and Heritage Service
580 Taylor Avenue, E-1
Annapolis Maryland 21401

Dear Maryland, DNR: Proposed Hunting Regulations 2018-2019

On behalf of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-AAC, please accept this letter as our additional comments regarding the proposed hunting regulations for the State of Maryland that were published in the Maryland Register.

We respectfully request in writing the specific reasons outlining the basis for your -MD-DNR changes to regulations that we believe will take Montgomery County backwards with deer management including deer harvest rates. It is our understanding the change in unlimited deer bag limits were more about how unlimited bag limits are perceived by the public. We do not agree unlimited bag limit creates a perception implying that deer are vermin and we still find the MD-DNR proposed reductions of bag limits for both Antlered and Antherless deer unacceptable.

We are disappointed that the Maryland DNR does not recognize the serious deer problems our residents continue to face. We need the assistance and support from all government agencies to address our concerns of Montgomery County having one of the highest rates of deer in the State of Maryland. Removing unlimited bag limits of deer and assigning specific numbers of deer will negatively impact the harvest rates of deer over the long run.

In the early 1990's, Montgomery County residents began complaining about the negative impacts of deer and this environment lead us to create the Deer Management Work Group consisting of all stakeholder agencies to meet annually and develop the Annual Deer Management Plan.

Our County Parks representatives realized how the growing deer population destroys the forest understory that wildlife like birds and turtles rely upon to survive. Today, we continue to hear concerns from residents about the loss of forest understory and how the deer roam in their yards looking for food to browse upon.

Archery hunting is the only remaining tool for reducing deer herds in our Urban Areas of Montgomery County where the discharge of a firearm is prohibited. Considering this environment, we strongly recommend that MD-DNR RESTORE the Suburban Deer Archery Zone (existed approximately 2006-2012, covering Montgomery, Howard, Prince Georges, Anne



Arundel, and Baltimore counties) including an unlimited bag limit of Archery Antlerless Deer in these five counties.

Montgomery County residents believe that we have too many deer and these same residents would not agree with MD-DNR that an unlimited bag limit creates a perception implying that deer are vermin.

With the number of deer vehicle collisions continuing to be reported over 2,000 annually in addition to the number of cases of Lyme disease, we believe the proposed hunting regulations for 2018-2019 should not in any way decrease the number of deer that hunters can harvest in Montgomery County.

The AAC would like to thank you for this opportunity to provide these additional comments on the proposed hunting regulations for the State of Maryland. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Beckler". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Chairman of the Agricultural Advisory Committee

Cc: Isiah Leggett, County Executive

Montgomery County Council members

We further request that MD-DNR increase the Antlered Deer bag limit from the proposed 2 deer to 6 Antlered deer within the Suburban Deer Archery Zone.